

**Adult Services Committee  
of the  
Mental Health Planning Council**

Minutes  
5/11/07

Forestry Training Building  
900 Natural Resources Drive  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

**Attendees**

Lisa Moore – Chair  
Ken Moore – Consumer representative  
Paige Mc Cleary – DSS substitute  
Sherry Rose - Consumer representative  
Mike Shank - DMHMRSAS  
Donna Sue Harmon – Northwest Peer Connect  
Jo-Amrah McElroy – DMHMRSAS

**Questions/Concerns from April 18, 2007 Mental Health Planning Council Meeting**

Members inquired about the status of a statement from Jack Wood and Brian Parrish regarding the decision by the General Assembly to reprogram money from the MH Block Grant. Members also inquired about the status of the list of priorities for one-time funding generated at the April 18, 2007 meeting. No one present had any information on these subjects.

**Review of the MH Block Grant Report**

Overall, the report was positive. Discussion followed regarding the General Assembly's authority to move allocated MH Block Grant funds without collaboration with the MH Planning Council. Information was shared, that indeed, it does appear that state legislatures can make this decision. The consensus was that the Mental Health Planning Council and members as individuals could communicate with legislators regarding the potential impact of continuing to appropriate funds in this way.

**Mental Health Law Reform Commission**

Allison and Sherry reported on the Task Force where they are members. The press was at their last meeting and both continue to feel a lack of respect for individuals with mental illness. They experience the Task Force meetings as traumatizing and feel that they are not being heard. They feel that there is a lack of effective communication at the meetings and there is not a spirit of recovery present in the meetings. Both requested support in the manner of an opportunity to get together with other consumers who are participating on other Task Forces and the Commission to debrief and develop a consumer plan for future involvement with the process. They requested support from the Department representatives who are present at meetings as well. There was

concern that too few consumers are on their Task Force. While new members are being added, they are not consumers.

Lisa requested that Jo-Amrah follow up with Will Ferris and Jim Martinez about the Department providing some support for consumers. Sherry and Allison emphasized that this support needs to be provided as soon as possible.

### **VT Tragedy – Implications for Mental Health Services**

There was much discussion about this subject and the ways that the incident at VA TECH could help or hurt the campaign to increase awareness regarding mental illness. The Committee discussed issues about outpatient commitments and concerns about safeguards for people and about the death rate for individuals with mental illness compared to the general population. There was agreement that this could be a time to educate the public about the importance of early intervention. Lisa agreed to make available a stress reduction CD that was recorded and donated for use by anyone experiencing stress related to the tragedy at VA TECH.

### **Statement from Mental Health Planning Council**

Allison recommended that the Committee encourage the Mental Health Planning Council to draft a statement in support of individuals with mental illness in an effort to expand awareness. There was consensus that this recommendation be made to the Council.

### **Future of Blue Ridge House in Charlottesville**

Ken requested ideas on how to transform clubhouse services to recovery focused services in response to a change in leadership at Blue Ridge House. This generated a good discussion and ideas.

\*Note

There was no recorder present at the meeting. Jo-Amrah volunteered to take minutes.

### **Next Meeting:**

July 13, 2007  
Forestry Training Building  
Charlottesville, VA  
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.